



JUNE 2015
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“Welcome Home” **NEWSLETTER**



“Member Feature”

by Mike Messenger, VVA Member Chapter CO 1106

POW/MIA

When I volunteered to write an article for the VVA Chapter 1106 Newsletter re: POW/MIA, I wanted to make this a column that will educate, enlighten and give due respect to our fallen comrades who still remain on foreign soil. I am sure we are all aware of the continued efforts by the DoD, JPAC and other close knit organizations that are currently in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Germany, Africa, France, Italy... etc. searching for the smallest of fragments in the biggest of battle fields. Monumental efforts continue as these teams are called to crash sites and villages of South East Asia. This is not an easy task and we need to continue to encourage our government and to never give up until they ALL COME HOME.



<http://rollingthunder1.com>

Every week on the **Rolling Thunder Today Show** (MileHiRadio.com) My co-host Larry “Hoss” Andrews and I begin our program with an updated report from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). The statistics we read are in regards to recent discoveries/recoveries of American Soldiers, Airmen and Seamen who have been found, identified and repatriated to American soil. The identification process is not easy... some bone fragments are no bigger than a nails head, maybe a rusted

piece of dog tag with a partial name or SN... regardless of size, in many cases a fallen comrade can be identified through forensic and chemical analysis (DNA) and returned to their families and burial with full military honors.

Statistics are great and in many respects offer a snapshot in the big picture. However, stats by themselves do not tell the whole story. The whole story comes from comrades, letters to and from family members or in the canteens of VFW's and the American Legion's across America and fragments buried over time in places where many drew their last breath defending freedom of others under the American flag.

We acknowledge the fact that we still have over 80,000 comrades MIA and unaccounted for from WWII to current. But lest we forget the Prisoner Of War or POW. Important stats and facts that remind us of our comrades who were captured, tortured, and worse, suffered death at the hands of our enemies. Our POW's paid the price for being an American Soldier and sacrificed most. These comrades spent months and years away from family in horrid conditions. Some came home... some did not.

More than one-fourth of the Americans held prisoner in the last five (5) U.S. conflicts are now living. Records show that 142,233 Americans were captured and interned during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the Somalia and Kosovo conflicts. This includes 81 women seized on Guam or in the Philippines during World War II, and two (2) during the Gulf War.

Of that total, an estimated 42,781 were living as

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of Jan. 1, 2002. This includes 39,719 from World War II, 2,434 from the Korean War, 601 from the Vietnam War, 23 from the Gulf War, one (1) from Somalia and three (3) from the Kosovo Conflict.

Yes, I can give you stats but I would rather introduce you to the men and women who were POW/MIA.

Notes from the President

Lee White

On Saturday, May 9, 2015, I attended the first Agent Orange town hall meeting, held at the American legion post 161 in Arvada. This was an "eye opener" for me.

This meeting was through the efforts of VVA Chapter 1071, VVA Chapter 1106, and VVA Chapter 1075 in Colorado Springs who provided the key note speaker, Dr. David Jenkins. Dr. Jenkins provided the attendance of over 100 Vietnam Veterans, with invaluable knowledge about Agent Orange. He expounded on the makeup of the chemical and the results that it causes to the human body. As most of us know, it was used as a herbicide to defoliate trees and grasses during the Vietnam War and was also sprayed in Guam, Thailand, and south Korea.

It is estimated that 12-15 million gallons of Agent Orange was sprayed over South Vietnam alone and had a concentration of 50-60 times the amount to kill weeds.

An estimated 4.5 million Vietnamese people and an unknown number of American soldiers, airmen, and sailors were exposed to Agent Orange.

Dioxin exposure alters the transcription of specific genes causing birth defects in offspring for generation after generation. It has been termed "agent orange just keeps on giving"

Dr. Jenkins stressed the need to let Vietnam Veterans aware of conditions that may be

caused by Agent Orange and to visit their local VA office.

Hr. 4816 (toxic exposure awareness act) is pending congressional approval and is expected to pass by Memorial Day.

In the very near future, Chapter 1106 will have additional information about Agent Orange on our website: www.vva1106.org

WELCOME HOME!!

Military Trivia

What does **Bravo Zulu** mean? See answer at the end of the Newsletter

Agent Orange - Effects on U.S. Veterans

Studies have shown that veterans have increased rates of cancer, and nerve, digestive, skin, and respiratory disorders, in particular, higher rates of throat cancer, acute/chronic leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, prostate cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, soft tissue sarcoma and liver cancer. With the exception of liver cancer, these are the same conditions the U.S. Veterans Administration has determined may be associated with exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin, and are on the list of conditions eligible for compensation and treatment.

Military personnel who loaded airplanes and helicopters used in Ranch Hand probably sustained some of the heaviest exposures. Members of the Army Chemical Corps, who stored and mixed herbicides and defoliated the perimeters of military bases, and mechanics

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who worked on the helicopters and planes, are



Huey delivering Agent Orange defoliant!

also thought to have had some of the heaviest exposures. However, this same group of individuals has not shown remarkably higher incidences of the associated diseases. Others with potentially heavy exposures included members of U.S. Army Special Forces units who defoliated remote campsites, and members of U.S. Navy river units who cleared base perimeters. Military members who served on Okinawa also claim to have been exposed to the chemical but there is no verifiable evidence to corroborate these claims.

While in Vietnam, the veterans were told not to worry, and were persuaded the chemical was harmless. After returning home, Vietnam veterans began to suspect their ill health or the instances of their wives having miscarriages or children born with birth defects might be related to Agent Orange and the other toxic herbicides to which they were exposed in Vietnam. Veterans began to file claims in 1977 to the Department of Veterans Affairs for disability payments for health care for conditions they believed were associated with exposure to Agent Orange, or more specifically, dioxin, but their claims were denied unless they could prove the condition began when they were in the service or within one year of their discharge.

By April 1993, the Department of Veterans Affairs had only compensated 486 victims,

although it had received disability claims from 39,419 soldiers who had been exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam.

Source: Wikipedia

Highlands Ranch Veterans Monument

The next time you are in Highlands Ranch, check out the Veterans Monument, located at 9292 South Ridgeline Blvd., right next to the James H. LaRue Douglas County Library. The monument was dedicated on July 1, 2009 and is the realization of a goal to honor the service and sacrifices of our nation's veterans.



Upcoming Events

June 11th. 50th. Vietnam Anniversary Event - Traveling "Moving Wall" - Ft. Carson, CO

The Saturday, July 4, 2015 meeting date has been change to Saturday, July 11, 2015. Same time, regular place!



Get there anyway you could!

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Membership Drive!

Do you have a VVA1106 Business Card? Send an email to: bobrotruck73@gmail.com and he will send you a template to print 10 business cards. When you see some folks that look like they could be Vietnam Vets, give them a card! Step up to the plate and ask them to join VVA1106? **Do it!** The worst they can say is, "I was a '60s love child!" Please **do not hit** them!! Grit your teeth, smile, and walk away!!!

Welcome new Members:

VVA

Robb Robichaud

Membership Total as of 5/15/2015: 37

Facts about the Vietnam Veteran

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was first recognized as a disorder with the specific symptoms that could be reliably diagnosed in 1980, well after the Vietnam War ended and our veterans returned home.



Any of your "friends"??!!

S. Dakota Veterans Pheasant Hunt

Chuck Webster, LT USN (RET) is a Life Member of VVA, SE South Dakota Chapter 1054 and member of DAV Chapter 13 and for seven years have sponsored a veteran's pheasant hunt event. The state only allows 20

hunters (gun carriers) to participate in a group hunt, but usually they have a group of about 30 people now as they have helpers and some guys just bring their dogs to help with the hunt. Plus they usually have two game wardens and a couple guys from **Pheasants Forever** as supporters but those guys don't carry guns. The Chapter members buy the shells, provide a



Sixteen in this group are Vietnam Vets

sack lunch, extra drinks (pop/water) during the day. They also buy 40 to 50 farm raised pheasants as they don't fly as fast and it allows some of the older guys to shoot birds. DAV Chapter 13 had members that have moved away from the state, but come back just for the hunt. In 2014, they had members from CA, AL, FL, TX and KY return. Hunters don't have to be a member of a Chapter nor do they have to be disabled, just a Veteran. The Chapter spends about \$1200 a year, highest cost being the birds. There is a Korean War Veteran, Duane Riedel, that has several sections of land that has allowed the hunt on his land each year, plus, he provides a couple drivers to help move the Veterans around and his crew goes and picks up the farm raised birds and puts them out in the fields.

Chuck says, "It is a great time, at the end of the hunt those guys are so happy with the day's events, different guys take the bird's home. They talk about eating the birds, fixing them and of course the hunt itself. For several, it is the

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only time each year that they get out. I would say off hand, everyone gets some shooting and almost everyone gets a bird or two. Last year we had twenty guns and shot 44 pheasants.”



An inspirational day for some vets that only get out once a year!

Well done VVA Chapter 1054 and DAV Chapter 13. What a wonderful Welcome Home!

Board of Directors/Officers

Lee White - President

Gary Fortner - Vice-president

Joe Plant - Treasurer

Hazel Simeon - Secretary

Board Members – Milt Omoto, Patti Ehline, Patrick Surrena

Working Committees

(Folks are needed to fill some spots!)

Agent Orange/PTSD -

Membership - Gary Fortner, Lee White

Newsletter Editor - Bob Rotruck

Fundraising/Grants - Milt Omoto

Marketing/Media/Events - Pat Surrena

POW/MIA – Mike Messenger

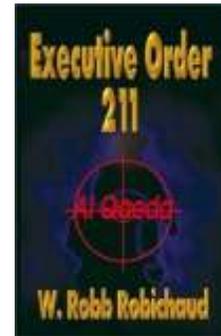
Webmaster - Hazel Simeon

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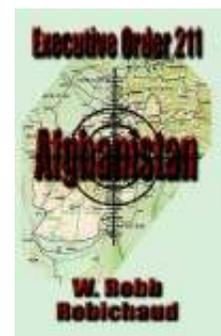


Get them to a MASH unit ASAP!!

Books/Articles Published by Members



Executive Order 211 Al Qaeda by W. Robb Robichaud is a modern day spellbinding thriller. It's a fictional journey into the intriguing covert depths of the hostile Middle East in search of Usamah bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist associates. (Editor's note: bin Laden first name is spelled correctly, but the Press changed it to make it easier for people to pronounce.)



"Book II is the continuing story of the first novel, *Executive Order 211 Al Qaeda*. Daniel White and Falcon Agency undertake special covert operations into Iraq and Afghanistan. The Iraq

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mission is to remove Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction cache located in the Iraqi mountains. The Afghanistan mission assigned is to find Usamah bin Laden and cohorts and bring them to justice. While on this mission, the September 11th attack against the United States occurs. Daniel White is the last person to see bin Laden alive. Is Usamah dead or alive? Enjoy the book to find out."



Daddy Come Home

My birthday is coming up soon,
We're having a party about noon.
Daddy can't you come home,
I don't want to party all alone.
We just celebrated Veteran's Day,
I did the best I could to pray.

Thanksgiving is coming soon,
We're having dinner about noon.
Daddy can't you come home,
I don't want to eat all alone.
I will say a very special grace,
And pray that I will soon see your face.

Christmas is coming soon,
We're opening presents way before noon.
Daddy can't you come home,
I don't want to see my presents alone.
I will say special words about baby Jesus,
And pray that you see him too with us.

And now a year has come and gone,
Daddy you've been away much too long.

Daddy can't you please come home,
I'm growing up, but I don't want to do it alone.
I will say my prayers at bedtime tonight,
And pray and pray that you are safe and all
right.

And now a stranger stands at our door,
I don't know why he is there for sure.
I heard him say it is with deep regret.
Mommy is frowning, her brow in a fret.
She drops to her knees and begins to cry,
I look at the stranger and I don't know why.
His uniform is like Daddy's, I wish it was he,
But your Daddy's not coming home you see.
He is safe in heaven with Jesus above,
But he sends you his undying love.

Daddy has gone home!

ROTRUCK - '07

Light Side

A group of veterans were visiting the Grand Canyon and the tour guide stated it took millions of years to create this! One of the vets hollered, "Must have been constructed by the VA!"

Shit: Through the Eyes of the Military

An Army grunt stands in the rain with a 35-pound pack on his back, 15-lb. weapon in his hand, having marched 12 miles, and says, "This is shit."

An Army Airborne Ranger stands in the rain with a 45-pound pack on his back, weapon in hand, after having jumped from a plane and jogged 18 miles, says with a smile, "This is good shit."

A Navy Seal lies in the mud, 55-pound pack on his back, weapon in hand, after swimming 10 miles to shore, crawling through a swamp, and running 25 miles at night past enemy positions, says with a grin, "This is really great shit."

A Marine, up to his nose in the stinking, bug-infested mud of a swamp with a 65-pound pack on his back and weapons in both hands after jumping from an aircraft at high altitude into the

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ocean, swimming 12 miles to shore, killing several alligators to enter the swamp, then crawling 30 miles through the brush to assault an enemy camp, says, "I love this shit."

An Air Force NCO sits in an easy chair in an air-conditioned, carpeted office in front of his computer and says, "My e-mail is out? What kind of shit is this?"

Trivia Answer

Bravo Zulu – (Worldwide Navies) Means 'Well Done'. Comes from the Allied Naval Signal Book, conveyed by flag hoist or voice radio.